

Only one camp in Umno, says Ismail Sabri

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob has dismissed claims of multiple factions in Umno, saying that there was only one camp in the party.

The Umno vice-president, however, stopped short of identifying the camp that he was referring to — whether it was his or party president Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi's.

"There is only one camp in Umno and that is all," he said briefly.

Of late, political observers and analysts have pointed out at least three camps in Umno purportedly under Ismail Sabri, Zahid and deputy president Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan.

On Pasir Salak member of parliament Datuk Seri Tajuddin Rahman's recent controversial revelation regarding Umno and its leadership, Ismail Sabri said it was "a thing of the past".

He said there was no need for him or anyone to mediate between Zahid and Tajuddin as the issue "has already been resolved".

"That's in the past. It's already done. So there is no issue on whether we need to mediate from the left, right or centre."

On Tajuddin's appointment as ambassador to Indonesia, Ismail Sabri cautioned Umno leaders and the public against speculating on the matter.

He said the decision on Tajuddin's appointment was made

with the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's approval.

"Let's not question this because it is akin to questioning the Agong.

"If we want to push (for Tajuddin's appointment to be revoked), then it means we are pushing the Agong because he gave his consent (to the appointment)."

In a tell-all press conference recently, Tajuddin, who was kicked out of the Umno supreme council a few days earlier, urged Zahid to step down as president, claiming that the latter was destroying Umno.

Tajuddin said Zahid was prone to attracting crises to the party and that he had forced Umno leaders to sign a statutory declaration in support of opposition leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as prime minister.

Tajuddin claimed that there was also a move to topple Zahid and that 130 division chiefs and several top leaders wanted the Bagan Datuk MP removed from the president's post.

Tajuddin claimed that the leaders of the plot to topple Zahid included Mohamad, former prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Umno Youth chief Datuk Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki and Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohamad Khaled Nordin.

However, he said, the plan failed when Mohamad bailed out at the last second.